

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

Sub 1
1. A process for manufacturing an absorbent dryformed web comprising:

laying a web of cellulose fibers, admixed with thermobonding fibers, onto a forming wire, wherein the thermobonding fibers comprise about 1 - 40% of the total fiber content;

applying a binder, wherein the amount of dry matter in the binder is from about 0.5 - 15% and the amount of dry matter applied to the surface of the web is from about 0.5 - 40 g. of dry matter per square meter of web surface; and

heating the web to a temperature sufficient to melt the thermobonding fibers and increase the tensile strength of the finished product.

2. The process according to claim 1 wherein the amount of dry matter in the binder is from about 0.5 - 10%.

Sub B7 3. The process according to claim 1 wherein the binder is applied in an amount of about 0.5 - 10 grams dry matter per square meter of web surface.

4. The process according to claim 1 wherein the binder is an aqueous binder.

5. The process according to claim 1 wherein the web material is manufactured with at a least one center layer containing a superabsorbent material.

Sub B7 6. The process according to claim 1 wherein a superabsorbent material is homogeneously distributed in the

web.

Sub B1
7. The process according to claim 1 wherein the binder contains pigments admixed therewith.

Sub A2
8. The process according to claim 2 wherein said web comprises about 20 - 35% thermobonding fibers and the amount of binder applied to the surface of the web is about 0.5 - 5.0 grams per square meter of web surface.

9. The process according to claim 2 wherein said web comprises about 3 - 7 % of thermobonding fibers and the amount of binder applied to the surface of the web is about 5 - 20 grams per square meter of web surface.

10. An apparatus for preparing a dryformed absorbent web comprising:

a device for drylaying fibers onto a forming wire for forming a fibrous web, wherein the device for drylaying operates based upon a mixture of cellulose fibers admixed with thermobonding fibers;

heating means defining a heating zone for bonding the web fibers;

a station for applying binder to at least one surface of the web, said binder being applied in amounts so as to render the finished web substantially non-linting.

11. An apparatus according to claim 10 wherein the binder is applied to at least one surface of the web in an amount corresponding to about 0.5 - 10 grams of dry matter per square meter of web surface.

12. The apparatus according to claim 10 wherein the station for applying binder to the surfaces of the web is a foulard for applying the binder in an aqueous foam carrier.

13. An absorbent dryformed web material predominantly comprising cellulose fibers and prepared so as to exhibit bonding of the fibers therein, wherein said bonding results from a combination of:

thermobonding fibers distributed at least in the outer parts of the web; and

a surface disposition of a binding agent in an amount of about 0.5 - 40 grams per square meter of web on at least one side of the web.

14. The web material according to claim 13, wherein the thermobonding fibers are distributed evenly throughout the thickness of the web.

15. The web material according to claim 13, wherein the binding agent is applied to at least one surface of the web in an amount of about 3 - 6 grams per square meter of web.

16. The web material according to claim 13 wherein the web comprises a mixture of about 75 - 95 % cellulose fibers and about 5 - 25 % thermobonding fibers, the binding agent being present in an amount of about 0.5 to 10 grams per square meter of web surface.

17. The web material according to claim 13 wherein the web material comprises a mixture of about 93 - 97% cellulose fibers and about 3 - 7% thermobonding fibers, the

binding agent being present in an amount of about 0.5 - 20 grams per square meter of web surface.

18. The web material according to claim 13 wherein the binding agent is present in an amount of about 1 - 5 grams per square meter of web surface.

19. A composite product wherein the outer layer of said composite product is the web material of claim 13.

20. The composite product according to claim 18 wherein the binding agent is the dry product of an aqueous binder dispersion.

21. The composite product according to claim 19 wherein another layer of the product is comprised of a superabsorbent material.

22. The web material according to claim 13 wherein the binding agent is pigmented.